

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-11, 13-18, 22, and 23 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 5, 10, and 18 have been amended and claims 4, 12, and 19-21 have been canceled. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the passing step includes the adding step. It is respectfully submitted that claim 1 and its dependent claims remain allowable in view of this clarifying amendment.

Further, Applicants submit that the amendments to the rejected claims have been made to add features from one or more allowed claims. Since these features have already been considered, Applicants submit that none of the amendments presented herein raise new issues requiring further searching or consideration by the Examiner. Entry of this paper is therefore respectfully requested.

In the Final Office Action, claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) for being anticipated by the Esaki patent. Applicants traverse this rejection on grounds that claim 2 has been amended to recite features similar to those that patentably distinguish claim 1 from the cited references.

For example, as amended, claim 2 recites passing the ATM cell received through an ATM switch to a cell processing circuit, said passing including adding a destination information field to the header portion of the ATM cell, processing the ATM cell, and “forwarding the ATM cell to a destination after the destination information field is removed, wherein the ATM cell is forwarded to said destination along a signal path that bypasses the ATM switch and wherein the destination information field is added to the header portion by the ATM switch or a circuit

located between the ATM switch and the cell processing circuit.” The Esaki patent does not disclose these features.

The Esaki patent discloses an ATM switch 141 that routes an ATM cell to a destination through a processing unit 14X. (See Fig. 3). However, as disclosed at column 14, lines 14-22, the input processing unit 14A adds tag information to an ATM cell for routing the cell to a particular destination. The input processing unit is located before the ATM switch 141 (Fig. 3), which is in contrast to claim 2 which requires the destination information to be added to a header portion by ATM switch 141 or a circuit located between the ATM switch 141 and processing circuit 14 X. Claim 2 further recites forwarding the ATM cell to a destination “after the destination information field is removed.” The Esaki patent also fails to disclose these features. Applicants submit that claim 2 and its dependent claims are allowable based on these differences.

Claim 5 has been amended to recite similar features, e.g., forwarding the ATM cell according to the added routing information to a destination based on the routing information added to the header of the ATM cell, wherein routing information is removed from the ATM cell and the ATM cell is forwarded to the destination along a signal path that bypasses the ATM switch, and wherein the destination information field is added to the header portion by the ATM switch or a circuit located between the ATM switch and the cell processing circuit. Applicants submit that claim 5 and its dependent claims are allowable based on these differences.

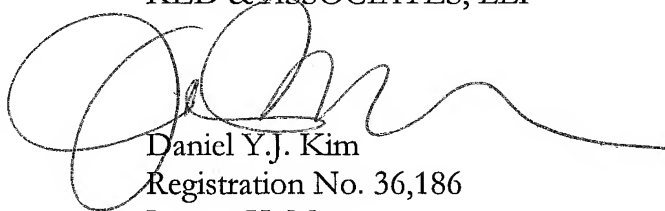
Claims 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) for being obvious in view of an Esaki-Smith combination. Applicants traverse this rejection on grounds that the Smith patent

does not teach or suggest the features of base claim 5 missing from the Esaki patent. Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 7 and 8 are allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and timely allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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